

# A Slap

AT

## THE BARBERS.

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By BARBAROSSA.

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*Dulce est decipere in Loco.*

LONDON:

PRINTED BY A. CHABOT, HOXTON, FOR A. ROSS,

Hair Cutter and Perruquier,

No. 39, CORNHILL.

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ROSS, Alexander

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[c. 1825]

W. B. ELLIS

AT

THE BALTIMORE

BY HARRISON

Printed and Sold by J. H. ELLIS

1840

PRINTED BY A. LEITCH, BALTIMORE

AND S. J. ELLIS

AT THE BALTIMORE

1840



TO  
**THE FASHIONABLE WORLD,**

**AND THE**  
**Admirers of Hair Cutting**

**AS IT OUGHT TO BE,**

**I DEDICATE THIS TRIFLE.**

IT consists of a few observations hastily put together, which may serve as a **BREAKFAST** amusement. Although I have only devoted a few hours to its composition, the subject has long occupied my attention. It may appear of no moment, but *professionally* it is of great importance. If I were to say that I am not partly governed by pecuniary views, I should display a greater share of disinterestedness than men are generally willing to put in practice, but I candidly confess that my primary motives in submitting these pages to the world arose from an attachment to my **PROFESSION**, (of which my father was for years the very *life, soul*, and most distinguished *ornament*) and an ardent desire to rescue it from its present degrading position, occasioned by the base artifices and unworthy means practised by those *Master Barbers* lately sprung up in such abundance.

Introduced *professionally* into the *highest circles* in *Europe*, independent of having attended upon every MEMBER of the ROYAL FAMILY ; and with a popularity never equalled, I may presume to have some claims to attention. My connection with a HOUSE (once the first in the world, when talent and energy governed it) and with which I associate the most animating recollections has ceased.

The PUBLIC will please to observe, that I do not pretend to write with the accuracy of a GRAMMARIAN, neither have I laid down a methodical arrangement in my undertaking ; it is not sufficiently serious to treat with gravity, therefore digressions and discrepancies are requested to be overlooked. I have prepared myself for the combined attack of a *Phalanx of Barbers*, but I shall prove too formidable for them.

ALEXANDER ROSS,  
Hair Cutter & Perruquier,  
No. 39, Cornhill,  
Entrance, first and second doors in Ball Court.

## PREFACE.

It is not my intention to enter into a disquisition on the human HAIR, neither is it necessary for my purpose, because, however laborious the research might be, no good could arise from it, and until the course of nature be altered (of which I have no idea) the HEAD of HAIR will always present the same appearance; by submitting my observations in a plain and intelligible manner, I will effect more good than the whole catalogue of SPECIFICKS recommended so industriously for the growth and improvement of the Hair; I am treading upon the ENEMIES ground, when I assert that the trash sold by the BARBERS is an entire HUMBUG and a grossly impudent imposition upon the PUBLIC; I do not mean to say that it will destroy the HAIR, but I insist, that it cannot effect one purpose for which it is so liberally forced upon the CREDULOUS; all that can be obtained by the application of these COSMETICKS is, that they impart a gloss to NATURAL and ARTIFICIAL HAIR, rendering the CURLS smother, and giving a temporary fragrance; lucre—the Barbers' God—is the sole consideration he has in view, in cramming down the THROATS of his CUSTOMERS, CREAMS, WASHES, OILS and BOTANIC WATERS. It will be urged that in



ADVERTISEMENTS inserted by various *Hair Dressers*, I have argued differently—very true—it is not generally known, but it is the fact, that when any of the *Barbers* require a *Puff* they are compelled to apply to me; the *heads* of these *Humbugs* are thicker than their *wooden blocks*, and although I write for them, I am not responsible for the consequences; when such a *Non-descript* as the *Bearish Tonsor* of *Threadneedle-street* importuned me upon his *knees*, and with tears in his *eyes* to compose a *Puff* for him, to please his *Barbarous vanity*, I compared him to *Cæsar* crossing the *Rubicon*; and when the *Finch-lane Tramper* did the same, I gave him the *cognomen* of *Colossus*; the effect in both was electrifying; so that the *Barbers* by persuading the world to believe these *Puffs* to be their own manufacture, take the onus off me. In my practice, which has been the most extensive in *Europe*, although a young man; I have observed with deep regret the cruel ravages which the indiscriminate use of *Cosmeticks* has made upon the *Hair*; in *Boarding Schools* particularly, which I have attended, it has been a heart breaking sight to witness the *hair* of a lovely *girl* fast withering to premature decay, and instead of beautiful tresses in infancy, which give promise of luxuriance in maturity, untimely destroyed by the poisonous *stuff* recommended by a rapacious *Hair Dresser*.

*Lavender Water*, *Honey Water*, and many other liquids composed in part of *Spirits of Wine* must necessarily injure the *Hair*; they are captivating by their fragrance, but I respectfully caution all *Families* and the *Proprietors* of *Scholastic Establishments* to take care, and not encourage the application of such dangerous trash. I knew a seminary consisting of forty *Young Ladies*, thirty of whom had their *Hair* destroyed by the immoderate use of *Lavender* and *Honey Waters*; I shaved their heads, and made them *Wigs*, and am rejoiced to say that I succeeded in restoring their hair. *Soap* too, (absolutely necessary for general comfort) I forbid the use of for the hair, upon pain of incurring my high displeasure. Those who value so distinguished an ornament of *personal figure* as a luxuriant



*head of hair* may be assured that by attending to my instructions they will adopt the safest mode of preserving it ; I do not presume to suggest an infallible remedy, but deducing from experience, I have been generally correct ; I give my best advice, and I offer (with the same confidence a physician would his prescription) the result of what I have learnt from a long study of the *human hair*. Much certainly depends upon the choice of a *HairCutter*, in this particular, *ladies* and *gentlemen* cannot be too circumspect ; so many *quack Barbers* have lately started, *mushroom* like, that the *City* is positively saturated with them, and of all the impudent and ignorant body of *tradesmen* with which *London* is infested, I know none so deserving castigation as the *Master Barbers* ; their whole system of transacting business consists in devising new stratagems to impose upon the *public* ; decency and common sense are so grossly outraged, that I am actually astonished how they are tolerated. Many a poor fellow has undergone punishment for violating the laws of his Country, whose offence has not been morally, one fiftieth part so injurious to society as the conduct practised by some of these *Gentry* ; *flash notes* of the *Bank of Elegance* for instance.

A *Hair Dresser* should be to *society* what a *lawyer* is to his *client*—confidential and secret ; by virtue of his profession, his services are necessary in families of all ranks in life, and if he have any ambition at all, he may soon acquire *manners*, a *polished habit*, and eventually cut a *figure*. If the advantages of education have unfortunately been denied him, what he sees and hears will impress upon his mind the necessity of attending to his conduct, but above all to his tongue ; he should never speak until spoken to. An intimacy is soon created between *ladies'-maids*, *butlers*, *valets*, and the *Family Tonsor* ; the habits of my *lord* and my *lady*, or of *master* and *mistress*, and the economy of the whole *household* are freely canvassed ; the gossiping Barber, big with the important news he hears from Betty or Johnny, hastens to his cronies in the next family he has to wait upon, opens his budget of the wonderful secrets entrusted

to him, and thus at last the world becomes acquainted with many *en dits* and circumstances which ought never to have been carried beyond the family mansion. Ladies and gentlemen frequently indulge in a familiar chat with their Friseur, but the loquacious barber taking advantage of such condescension, or too ignorant to know better, immediately opens his vocabulary of anecdotes, lies, and scandal; a hair dresser has got so much of the *cacoethes loquandi* that you may as well attempt to stop the impetuosity of an avalanche, as put a curb upon his tongue.

A coiffeur should be intelligent, polite, of genteel manners, circumspect in his conduct, and having always in view the honor of his profession; besides, he should possess the *suaviter in modo with the fortiter in re*. I feel pleasure in declaring that the present race of journeymen hair dressers are infinitely superior in every requisite to their employers; they are the most respectable in appearance and conduct, the trade could ever boast of, and I hope in time to see by their efforts, the profession restored to respectability. They are deserving of encouragement, but their tyrants are not sufficiently liberal; I have long known, and respect them. I consider my own interests so intimately identified with theirs, that I ardently wish them every success. An ignorant hair dresser is of all animals the most annoying, he will positively give you a surfeit; I know two of these gentry; the one a *lulus naturæ* living in Threadneedle Street, the other, a *rara avis*, and garret master in Finch Lane, who, out of doors, might by their habiliments pass for genteel footmen out of livery; but in their business, what a treat!!! These two *comets* will tell you that your hair can be *harranged* in the most *beautifulest* style, that none can *hequal* them, and that they *cuts betterer* than *hany body helse*. If this be not *splitting the ears of the groundlings with a vengeance*, I am no Barber. Yet these *worthies* call themselves *stars of the first magnitude*.—They are quite right; one is the *Dog Star*, and the other the *Great Bear*. How uncomfortable must men of education feel when they cannot have the simple operation of *cutting the hair* performed, without a contribution being

levied upon their *ears*, as such a robbery upon plain words. The two *Barbers* I have mentioned, invariably put the general question of, how will you have your hair cut? I would recommend gentlemen to answer—*without saying a word*—this will at least preserve their *ears* from annoyance. These *constellations* must be eclipsed.

The intercourse with France is now so rapid and convenient that persons in all stations of life talk of *French* this and *French* that, from pomposity, although perfectly ignorant of the language, *French names* are even assumed; I know an *Irishman*, a regular *Patlander*, a *would-be Hair Cutter*, a vain and ignorant *ape* of all that's *French*, who, not content with the *cognoman* his father gave him (but which sounds so melodious, that the bogs of Lochrea and the mountains of Galway have for centuries reverberated to its sweet echo) has changed it from *O'Mooney*, to *Money*. Stand forth thou *classic Owen O'Mooney*, now transmogrified into *Money*, and pronounce *bares graze!* Ye Gods! what a *trale* it is to hear *Mr. O'Mooney spake Irish French*; the very moment he opens his *Hibernian Bouche Pat stands confessed*.

Finch Lane has lately become so offensive in consequence of the five *barbatic* establishments, that the neighbours are perpetually annoyed by their squabbles, and have determined to indict them the first opportunity; indeed it is as difficult to pass through with comfort, as to obtain an audience with a Secretary of State; these gentry are now denominated **BARKING BARBERS**, from their constant practice of walking up and down before their doors with cards in hand, soliciting custom. *Date obolum Bellissario.*

I have spun out this preface longer than I intended, but the subject, if I could do it justice, is inexhaustible. The two characters I have chosen are the most prominent of the *pack*; justice shall be done them. I am above common prejudice, and will “nothing extenuate or aught set down in malice.” With private affairs I meddle not, but the Augean Stable must be cleansed; be the Herculean task mine.



# C. MACKTAB,

COMMONLY CALLED

## THE GREAT BEAR.

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I do not know of any species of literature more amusing than biography; and our history furnishes so many splendid illustrations of eminent characters who have figured upon life's great stage, that one might suppose nature by this time were tired with producing prodigies; but as she ever varies in her caprices, a new stock springs up daily. Under what class of her heterogeneous brood I can place the subject of this memoir I scarcely know; but I take him as I find him.

It is natural for man to emulate the actions of those worthies who have acquired fame and fortune, and thereby an immortality; but at the same time there is another race of characters who have made their debut and exit upon a certain stage, whose example I would by no means recommend to imitate; there is a consolation left, that though the world may frown, posterity will do justice, and if merit had its reward, I know a Barber who would long ere this have been exalted. Blessed are the lowly for they shall be raised up, and Mack I will raise such a monument to thy fame, that thy melodious name shall resound from Petticoat Lane to the muddy kennels of Threadneedle Street, and you will cherish the day I became your historian.

What parish in Scotland claims the high honor of giving birth to this being I know not; I only know the Mactabs are descended from a long race of *illustrious ancestors*, who for centuries resided near the sea shore. The ancients placed great faith in omens, and there is related a story, how true I cannot tell, that upon the auspicious birth of Mack, a Great Bear which had strayed from the opposite coast of Norway, took refuge in the Mactabs' domain, this strange circumstance gave rise to various conjectures, the family oracles were consulted, but no rational inference could be drawn, until a famous Magician travelling that way, offered for a considerable douceur to interpret the mystery of the Bear's arrival upon so

memorable a day; the pride of the Macks being excited by the grave demand of the magician, they agreed to his terms, and actually sold a Shetland pony to gratify their desire; but what was their surprise and exultation, when he told them that the Cherub would one day be a Bear Killer; now a Bear Killer in plain language is nothing, more or less, than a melter of Hogs Lard, and Kitchen Stuff, but the Macks attached so much importance to Bear Killer, that the neighbouring Clans were summoned by the melodious sounds of Scotch Bag Pipes to hail the youthful destroyer of Bears—it is said that the Bear exhibited great kindness towards the young Laird—that a sort of pactum familiæ was established between them; if this be true, it may account for his having whiskers at the age of Seven.

How he came to London, or from what cause he left Scotland; (and rumour has been busy upon that point), I neither know nor care—it is sufficient for my purpose that I found him for years figuring in a Shaving-shop in the cyprian vicinity of Trafalgar-street, City Road; having by economy, amassed a few pounds, he took his departure, and established himself near the Royal Exchange; he knew that by hook or by crook, a possibility existed of humbugging the public, and resolved at once upon the part he should act—a long lie, a strong lie and a lie altogether, were only necessary to excite public curiosity; accordingly having read as well as he was able, Munchausen's travels over and over, he became the accomplished liar he now is; then commenced that system of trickery and imposition, which has ever since distinguished him, and which, if I live, shall be engraven as an epitaph upon his tomb. At this period my father died, and family circumstances co-operating, very much altered my prospects; however, the Bear-killer knowing well the estimation in which I was held by the world, importuned me to live with him: he was cunning and I unsuspecting; hundreds of gentlemen seeing me at his house, imagining I had some interest in the business had their hair cut; this brought grots to his mill, at last, by a puff I made him. The Lard-melter knowing I had some tact that way, so strongly urged the necessity of a glorious puff that I sat down to compose one—two heroes of antiquity occurred to me, and I only hesitated whether I should compare him to Alexander the Great crossing the Grannicus, or Cæsar, the Rubicon; at last I resolved upon Cæsar, but I had great difficulty to encounter, Mack could not understand Cæsar and the *unicorn*, and his wife had an objection, Cæsar was a dog's name, and she would not have her *gude man* compared to a dog; *na, na, she wud na hae it*, but when I assured her that the great Cæsar was just like her Lord and Master, being only four feet high, but with a mighty soul, she exclaimed, *weel, weel*, just *make* him what ye like, ye ken, ony thing, so you make a man of him. Well, with Cæsar, assisted by the Horatii and Curatii, I produced that famous puff which has brought the Bear thousands, there was something so singularly novel in it, that it had an electrifying effect, and from that time fortune smiled.

upon this Bobadil, without one particle of merit, without a single accomplishment, nay, without being able to hold his comb and scissars with decency, and with the manners of a Russian Bear, he has for a considerable time enjoyed great patronage, but his conduct is now appreciated, and he is fast sinking into deserved contempt; he alone can claim the distinguished merit of introducing flash notes, which have done so much evil, and of which the police reports can furnish so many disgraceful proofs; there is no practice more dishonourable than this—it is disreputable to the character of a tradesman, and injurious to the best interests of the empire. I speak advisedly, when I say, that no honest tradesman will adopt this plan as necessary to carry on business. The notes of the Great Bear have been put in liberal circulation, and levied very heavy contributions. The French have a very happy expression for a person whose character and calling are apocryphal, they denominate him *Chevalier d'Industrie*—such individuals do not care paying sixpence to have their hair cut, when they can obtain a fictitious note, which their manner of living can pass as genuine. The whole system of Mactab consists in fleecing the victims who resort to the Hair Cutting Mart. Many a poor devil has been compelled to stint his stomach in going there to have his hair cut;—bear's grease, hair brushes, oils, &c. &c. are literally forced upon you, so that a hole is made in two sovereigns. His Protæan fancy is ever and anon occupied in lies and slander. I will pass over one mean dirty act he practised upon myself—he has got frills to his shirt now—he will know what I mean: it is impossible I can envy this creature—had he merit or talent, I would give the devil his due. The Bear once hit upon a plan, which, although a dirty one, was nevertheless of great service to him: whenever he saw a gentleman with a wig on, not made by himself, he gave the hint to one of his boys—the gent. was watched, his residence became known, and the next day a letter was despatched as if from a friend, intimating that his wig disgraced him, and that he ought to apply to the renowned Mactab. Strange as it may appear, many orders were procured by this laudable scheme. If you want a wig composed of five or six different colours, the mart is the very place.

I once dined with the great Bear, and partook of a favorite Scotch dish—it is called cockey leekey; one circumstance attending this meal is rather curious; Mrs. M. is a thrifty wife, and highly gifted in her vernacular tongue; she told me that butcher's meat was very expensive, and that a prudent economy was best in these hard times; and in order to give me a treat, she had prepared cockey leekey. Upon asking what it was composed of, she replied, from a cock's head cut in pieces and stewed down with a variety of herbs and vegetables; observing at the same time that the gude man's auld cock being stale and not of much use, she had cut its head off; now, gude man being in Scotch, the familiar term an obedient wife applies to her husband, I felt some apprehension for Mack, but I was happily relieved by finding she had only cut off the head of an old capon



to make cockey leekey. I am unwilling to waste much time upon this vender of flash notes, because I have better game in my next hero; however a circumstance occurred some time ago which has rendered him particularly offensive; his best friends have deserted him in consequence, and the transaction will remain a damning proof of his dirty, narrow, and envious disposition.—A very deserving young man of the name of Cormic (and I am sorry to associate him in the same place with Mack) commenced business for himself in Threadneedle Street, Mack was so jealous of him, that he went to Guildhall and informed against him in person for not being free of the city, but he got nothing by his motion, as lawyers say, for Cormic received every indulgence. I am liberal enough to recommend Cormic as an excellent hair cutter, he is deserving of patronage, and adds to a knowledge of his business a propriety of demeanour, which I have every reason to believe, will command success.

A noble lord whose custom or even acquaintance I should not be ambitious to court, popped into Mack's to have his hair arranged and paid the usual fee of one shilling; a gentleman in the room at the same time knew this sprig of nobility, and after his departure told Mack who he was, the bear killer astonished, ran down stairs with the pride of blood running frolic through his veins, and communicated the important news to his *cara sposa*, "I declare to God, (a favorite expression) I thought he was a laird by his appearance." But Mack felt chagrined, had he known a peer was under his hands, how the lard, washes, and brushes, would have been put in requisition. This circumstance disturbed his rest for many nights, but shortly after he had an opportunity of exercising his elegant loquacity, my lord made his appearance a second time; with apron, clean (rather unusual) comb, and scissors fresh ground, Mack was *au fait*; O had ye but seen him standing upon a stool, to give him altitude, with crest erect, his optics darting barbat fire as he contemplated with fawning pride the piece of *dignified birth* before him, the scene would amuse ye: Mack was determined no time should be lost, and instantly opened his artillery of balderdash: "Was your noble lordship pleased with my efforts the last time I *harranged* your hair; did I give your honour satisfaction; I assure your *Hexcellency* I took *particularly pains*—if I had had the pleasure of knowing that your *stinguished* worship was under my mauleys—Mack here forgot himself, and his lordship looked queer, but resuming, I say my lord, although I waits upon many *person* of *high cranology*, yet I never put my fingers through a finer catput in my life; Mack meant caput, the *latin word* for head: such jargon was unintelligible to nobility, but his lordship was doomed to suffer further; did I not see your *lordship* when the dog billy killed so many rats? Oh it was a glorious sight! I am quite an *hammatore* in these here sort of sights; I only lost a bull and a bottle of Scotch whiskey,

will your honour go over to Josh Hudson's and take a drain?—my lord making neither head nor tail of such nonsense, threw down his shilling; but two shillings and sixpence being demanded because he was a lord, he paid the sum, made his obedience, heartily glad to escape, Mack's dulcinea, declaring with her best courtsey he was an *heligant lairdship*, and my lord has ever since avoided visiting the Mart.

It is not absolutely necessary for a Hair Dresser to be seven feet high, but by being above mediocrity, he has a greater command over his client's head; now it so happens that the lard-melter is under the standard; (I mean this as no reproach, for God has not made us all alike), and compelled to use a stool; standing upon this said stool, one day, in bending himself, it unfortunately slipped, and falling over his customer, the shock was so sudden, that the gent tumbled neck and crop into the fire, and burnt what hair escaped the curling irons; to hush up the catastrophe, a wig was given the gent.—Reader were you ever at Billingsgate in the sprat season? did you ever hear twelve fire engines in full gallop in the streets of London? if not, go to the Hair Cutting Mart, and there you will be transported with sounds of the sweetest *Scotch* melody.

The Bear-killer is up to as many tricks as a monkey; ever intent upon getting money: he took a house in Finch-lane, and called it the Associated Hair Cutting Company, puffed it off as conducted by Frenchmen, but the mighty secret soon got wind, for the devil a Frenchman was there ever seen there; here economical gents can have their hair cut, curled, and well singed in the bargain for sixpence but threepence are never refused. This establishment is now going to change masters, Cormic has taken it—thus one nuisance will be removed—the manner and habits of the Bear-killer are at variance with gentility; his method of conducting business is now understood, and he may exclaim, Oh now farewell the whiskered-wig! farewell the curled mustachios, and the rough grunting bear! farewell to all the lies, tricks and flash notes I have long foisted upon the credulous; and Oh ye press which was wont to laud my schemes, and for which I paid so dear, farewell! the humbug is known, and Macktab's occupation's gone—O Charlie, Charlie! Oh! Oh! Oh!!!

When Charlie wants a bear, he generally applies at Tothill Fields, and there procures an old baited one for two shillings and sixpence per diem, and after he has exhibited it to public curiosity for a few days, poor Bruin is returned to his owner—then commenced the midnight orgies of melting down the lard, kitchen stuff and marrow bones, and sold as genuine Bear's Grease. This system the Barber calls fair trading; but short is the prosperity of fraud and easy its detection.

R—— G——,

COMMONLY CALLED

## SMOOTH-FACED DICK.

---

Come forth my javilin, strike the astonish'd town,

Say, shall I cut him up or write him down ;

Nay, never tremble Dick, or slink away,

'Tis what some poor devils suffer every day.

If so drest up you play the lying fool,

I'll hold you out at once to ridicule ;

'Twill help to keep all Finch Lane quiet,

And save it from barbarous noise and riot.

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IN mythology there is an animal (whose name I forget, but it bears some analogy to a Barber's I know), said to be generated between the lion and the eagle, and to have the head and paws of the lion, and the wings of the eagle, now in the lion, if he be not very hungry, there is some generosity, and we all know the eagle to be a most rapacious bird of prey, and inasmuch as the lion lords it over the beasts of the forest, and the eagle over the birds of the air, so does my present hero aspire to be the Cock of the Barking Barbers. In a lane not far from the Royal Exchange, and the vortex of lies, envy, malice, all uncharitableness, and barbatie impudence, resides the fabled animal I have described. I never sat down with a hungry *Venter* (and I have done so often) to a good dinner with more pleasure, than I now do to delineate the character of this Colossus of trampers ; I am just in the humour, and if I do not give him a dose sufficient to purge a whole parish, mark me down as a *stultus*, I will give him a lift as high as Mount *Olympus*, and his Munchausean fame shall resound



from the Pillars of Hercules, (if he knows where they are,) to the place of his nativity. Nay, I have a parrot forty years old, the aptest scholar I ever knew, and I will teach it to pronounce lying, slandering Dick, and yet, on my soul, I bear this animalculum no ill will; if he alters his conduct, I will write his puffs as usual; but he must have a castigation. I long to grapple with him comb to comb.

I am liberal in my opinion of the talents of Hair Dressers; when I find merit, I rejoice to announce it; I am not that peevish, petulant, and envious creature the Trampler is; I do not assume exclusive merit as the Colossus does; I cannot bluster, swagger, and use foul mouthed language as some ruffians I could name do; I do not go to a chapel in Moorfields on a Sunday, damn and blast all the week, and appear before my customers a Dr. Cantwell; I have seen so much of his unblushing effrontery and defaming of character, even before his kind but credulous patrons, that I am determined to do him justice; I have thoroughly studied his professional character, policy and system, yet there is such an heterogeneous mixture of absurdity, vanity, and ignorance in his composition, that my great difficulty will be in finding words to depict him.

Some place near Bugsby's Hole, on the Thames, claims the merit of giving birth to this harlequinading Barber; of his parents I have no account, and if I had

*De Mortuis Nil nisi Bonum.*

In what seminary he was educated in the art and mystery of slander I know not, but it is said he displayed at a very early age great proficiency in the principles of lying, this part of his scholastic acquirements, and which he considers so necessary to complete a Barber, he finished at Macalpines, under such an adept he could not fail making progress; but he has much improved himself, and now outstrips his former employer. At the age of fourteen he was bound apprentice to a country Barber, but from what cause I know not he soon bolted, and being of a wandering disposition, he joined a party of strolling players, commonly called in genteel phraseology *Mouldy Grubbers*, and was soon appointed head shaver and face painter to the company. I am serious when I say he once broke his leg, and I am rejoiced that a perfect cure was effected, but the accident arose from such a curious circumstance, that I cannot help mentioning it. One evening he attempted to personate harlequin, and having had nothing to eat or drink all day, seeing one of the mouldy grubbers or performers sipping gruel out of a vessel that shall be nameless, in making a spring to grab it, to allay his thirst, he fell and broke his limb; how long he continued this life I am not informed, but he afterwards turned trampler; that is, travelling over the Country from one village to another, cutting the rusticks' hair; sometimes he would assume courage and

call at a family mansion, and his first point was to make friends with the cook or housekeeper; by the present of a front or some curls; he has often carried to his den (for he had no settled habitation), a wallet full of grub, sufficient to last for a *month*—however, some years ago I found harlequin in a shaving shop; riding one summer's day to attend professionally, a family consisting of five sons and nine beautiful daughters, from whom, I always received a sincere welcome, and whose kindness upon many occasions (while memory holds her seat) I will never forget; I went into a barber's shop to have my head shaved; the imperious master ordered Dick to perform the job—I think he had a presentiment of whose head he was shaving, as he displayed considerable trepidation, but I eased his fear by encouraging talk, and he went through the operation tolerably; I told him if he behaved well, I might be of service to him, and desired him to call upon me if ever he came to London. I then gave him two shillings and sixpence for himself, and as a proof of his frugality, he has kept it ever since. Circumstances of a family nature made me lose sight of him; and indeed I had altogether forgotten him, had not a circumstance (to him for ever fortunate) introduced me to him; he was aware I wrote Mack's puffs, and knowing the great trade Mack acquired by puffing, he resolved so profitable an example should not be lost—Mack reflected upon what he called petty shops; this galled Dick so sorely, that he could neither eat, drink or sleep till he had found me: many a night of anxious solicitude has he passed; he knew I was his man to give the Great Bear a slap; and in his dreams; Oh, what a victory did he achieve when his perturbed imagination presented me writing a puff against Mack. His wife was one night thrown into a dreadful state of alarm by his jumping out of bed vociferating with stentorian voice, give him another rub—spare him not Ross—at him again—then seizing his curling irons, like another Richard he exclaimed—come forth my honest irons, which here before Heaven I vow shall ne'er again singe a head of hair; ne'er shall my scissars cut an ear or sever a louse, until with Ross's aid overthrow Macalpine—in this fit did he remain till what little reason he has came to his aid. At this period he had but two men; at last, hearing where I was, I received a polite invitation to dinner from him (while writing this, the note lies before me, and I give it as it is.)

Mr. G — represents his respectable compellments to Mr. A. Ross, Esquer. and hurgenty requesteses thee honour of his compeny to diner on Thursday nextt, shoud a pryor hengagement interweene Mr. R. can lett M. G. now

So singular an invitation rather surprised me, but I attended to it; little imagining to recognise harlequin as my host, however there he was in propria persona; after a few preliminary words which I scarcely remember, down we sat to dinner; Oh, I shall never forget it, it was a substantial dish of veal cutlets, large

Spanish onions, and plenty of them, fried in ale, and mixt with melted butter, oyster sauce, and chili vinegar, I confess I never partook of such a dinner before, but not being very particular, I ate heartily. I will do him the justice to say, that he put a bottle of excellent port and madeira upon the table, and while the glass was circulating, I observed that his cogitations were big with importance. He tried my humour, by proposing a toast of damnation to Macalpine, I acceded, not caring much if they were both damned together, but in the act of deglutition, harlequin's wine went the wrong way, and out it squirted through his nose and mouth upon his wife's muslin dress and partly over the table; good manners alone prevented me from laughing, having in some degree overcome his timidity by my familiar chat, he at last ventured to make, but subject to my permission, the strangest proposition ever poor maniac could imagine, I do not think I ever heard of such a monstrous whim, the only analogy I can find, is in Smollet's *Peregrine Pickle*, where in a supper given after the manner of the ancients, and called silly kickabys, the most opposite ingredients are mixt together, its a glorious treat to read; well then, he asked me if I had any objections to mix both wines with an infusion of assafœtida, on my soul, I could no longer continue my gravity, and I asked the reason for that mode of drinking wine, so contrary to the rules of polished society, he told me that having oven night drank copious libations of raw gin, his breath might be offensive, and that a friend told him the wines so mixt would counteract the effects of a gin debauch. O climax of barbarism! However, I gave in to his humour, drank a glass of the nausea, and soon had the satisfaction of discharging from my stomach over the table, a tolerable share of veal cutlets, Spanish onions, melted butter, and oyster sauce. I told him garlick was the best antidote for a foetid breath, he thanked me, took the hint, and said he would always carry some in his breeches pocket. Being baulked in my wine, I was doomed to undergo another mortification—he sent to Angels for some blanch-monge and jelly, and had them mixed with caper sauce, like a mess for a hog. I was near cascading, and to avoid any further annoyance, I asked him to what circumstance I owed the honor of his invitation; he immediately produced the *Morning Chronicle*, pointed to Mack's advertisement and ventured to request I would write one for him. I had no objection; before I write for a barber I contrive to ascertain the quantum of brains he has, and I found harlequin the best subject I ever came near; Sir Jeffery Dunston would have been as good a comparison as Cæsar or the admirable Crighton, he would not have known the difference. However, to write a puff I sat down, and in an hour produced that which has procured him an immense custom. In comparing him to the mighty Cæsar and the admirable Crighton, I indulged in my own predeliction for these two incomparables; but to Harlequin it was *Esquimaux*; he got this inserted in the *Morning Chronicle*, from thence on account of its singularity it was copied, with high encomiums, gratuitously into many other



papers; then came that flow of business which has turned his supercilious cranium. He was so pleased with my efforts that he urgently solicited my services; he knew well the importance he would derive from having me in his establishment, he well knew, and I say it without vanity, that I could teach him the most essential departments of the business, and above all, he knew that I could polish him if it were possible. I have reduced bears to domestic subjection, but of all the uncouth, uncivilized, and uncultivated barbarians I ever knew or read of, Dick beats them all. Impudently conceited, ignorantly haughty beyond forbearance, a demigod in his own opinion; as jealous of all other barbers as a barbary cock pigeon over his hen; more clamorous than a parrot against rain; more newfangled than an ape, and more giddy in his desires than a monkey. I have seen him humbled and fit to lick the dust; I shall never forget when a gentleman once asked him the meaning of *veni, vidi, vici*; the rats pursued by the dog billy did not scamper with more velocity, than did Harlequin to avoid the interrogatory; he was taken ill—a cold sweat bedewed his frame—his limbs shook under him—he was seized with the odd-cum-shorts, and remained in his garret all day. This proves that a man never appears more ridiculous than when he puts forth what he understands not. He one day took the liberty of offending me most grossly, and I soon resolved upon a course to pursue; he is so intoxicated with vanity, that with management you can lead him like a donkey by the ears; if you only tell him that a woman decently drest admired his jacket, ten to one but he asks you up stairs, and gives you a glass of small beer. A Gentleman once asked him what particular cut he called his jacket; I was vexed to see him at a loss for an answer, and giving him a wink, (you will often perceive winking there, and a meaning is attached to it,) he followed me out, and I desired him to tell the Gent. that it was made in the *Doric* style;—the eclairsment was beautiful, and I would not have lost the effect for a good deal;—it's a pity, so good a shaver should possess such a large quantum of intellect. I really did feel a desire to bestow some pains upon him, notwithstanding his arrogance, and I suggested the propriety of going through a course of lectures, he entered into my views, and requested I would become his tutor. I foresaw the herculean task I had to perform; and I accordingly fortified myself with the reflection that I should be conferring Christian benevolence upon a stultus who actually required attention; the innumerable blunders he daily committed, and the satirical remarks of many persons who visited his place purposely to laugh at him, made a strong impression upon me; so I commenced my profession of tutor to this incomparable; and first I had to explain and push into his stuped cranium the meaning and application of the Latin words I put into his puff; it was a long time ere I made any thing of him, but, at his own request, by holding a cane over him in *terrorem*, he did make some proficiency: I had to teach him to

walk, to carry himself properly, and how to accost a customer with ease but not familiar—night after night have we marched up and down his room, between the two glasses keeping time to some tune; no-awkward squad ever required more trouble to bring into order than did this raw recruit; but it was of no use—he was perfectly incurable, so I left off drilling as a hopeless job.

Instead of that polite manner of carrying on business to which I have been accustomed; bullying is the order of the day here, harlequin calls it independant, if I mistake not he will soon find his account in such independance. I once saw his seat of honor dignified with what shall be nameless for his impudence. There is one blackguard practise he daily pursues, and I repeat that none but an accomplished blackguard would pursue it; if you wear a wig, not made by him, and pass by his door, your ears are saluted with a noise resembling a Chinese gong, of, there's a wig, there's a wig, but this is not all, he makes his men join in chorus; a gentleman he served so, came back and gave him what I should not wish to undergo. He has but one man of talent, and he really is an excellent hair cutter, Dick is not able to hold a candle to him, his pretensions to hair cutting are worse than Mactab's, but if you believe him he is a prodigy, he is well aware of his man's ability, and pays him liberally, I hope he will long keep him, if he looses No. 1, the Colossus may shake; the rest of his Chevaliers—God save the mark! are below mediocrity. I would not give the smallest coin in the King's dominions for the best hair cutter in England if he had not the manners of a gentlemen. Nature never formed harlequin for a hair cutter, his huge paws resembling a tolerably sized Welsh shoulder of mutton, are not calculated for a genteel hair dresser; just have the curiosity to take a double sight at his fists, but he is an excellent shaver, with this difference, that you would imagine a ton weight upon your face.

I am just enjoying a hearty fit of laughter, and if you saw me, you would either imagine I were deranged, or reading Don Quixote, and what do you think is the cause, on my soul I cant help laughing, but I must be serious while I relate all about the King's wig, his Majesty's wig, George the fourth's wig, never was farce better concocted, but the result was disastrous, Dick, Dick, you overshot the mark, the King's wig tickles my fancy, and now for it; while writing a puff for harlequin one day, about a new wash he was manufacturing, and which I purposely called *aqua renovata* but which should have been in good Latin, *aqua renovans*; he knew no better, how the devil should he; he asked me if he might call himself wig master to the King, I replied, certainly, as it would not be worth his Majesty's while or any body's else to contradict it; assured of this, he immediately dubbed himself perruquier to the King, but that was not sufficient, he must have a wig made for exhibition resembling in colour and form his

Majesty's, so having procured some hair, a large size block, and a decent wig maker, a wig, the *King's* wig was stitched up, all was not yet complete, a bust of George the fourth was procured, and all was now prepared, but the tale was to be arranged, so marshalling his men he thus began; I will put it in decent language, his being balderdash. As humbugging is the order of the day, and as nothing can be done without it, and to revive business, you must have your parts complete, first you must say, and if necessary swear, that the King being informed of my eminence, demanded my attendance, and after making a wig for him, he was so pleased with my performance, that he only regretted not having heard of me before, and that he gave positive orders to have all his other wigs burnt, likewise that I am to have a wig constantly ready for his Majesty, and that no doubt I will in time be gazetted as Wig Maker Extraordinary to George the Fourth, with a sinecure of £1200 per annum. As many more lies as your own inventive faculties and my assistance may suggest, you are with my approbation, at perfect liberty to propagate. This you all agree to, and I will give each of you an extra glass of blue ruin; so Vivant Rex et Tonsor Dick, were echoed with barbatie acclamation. When it suits Harlequin's caprice the King's wig is brought into the room, combed out differently: and behold; that's another wig for the King sir—how many have you made?—that's the seventh, sir.

He one day asked me to write a letter to the King; so I began as a dutiful and loyal barber would do to address his Majesty, requesting his acceptance of a wig; and I concluded by saying,

I am,

Your Majesty's most dutiful  
and Royal Subject

Dick said it was just the thing he wanted.

He one day hired a post chaise and four, to cut a swell; drove down to Brighton; spent twenty pounds, and demanded an audience of the King's friseur (who has a sinecure, and always resides in the palace) told his purpose, presented the letter I wrote; and as I anticipated, got worse served than poor *Sancho Panza*: on his return home never was poor Bear in greater agony; he licked his lips, snuffed the air, and squinted with a most horrible obliquity of vision. There is a sweet perfume lately come out called *Bouquet de Roy*, or King's Nosegay; Harlequin expatiating upon its fragrance, told a gentleman it was named *Bucky de Roy*.

Ever fertile in framing plans to gull the public: I will point out another instance of his stultifying ambition, and if it be not considered the ne plus ultra of impudence, I am content to be called what you please.



To give the finishing stroke to his giddy and capricious humour, he resolved upon having a gold medal struck, which he intended to wear round his neck, with a gold chain, as he said, like an *Hulderman's*; he was to tell his customers that it had been awarded to him by the society of arts of the Sandwich Islands, as a testimonial of his *incomprehensible merit*—I like a bit of fun dearly, and particularly with a vain and foolish barber, so I seconded his proposition, observing that none but a genius of the first order, could think of such schemes to get business—now Ross, tell me candidly, do you really think (and I know you are a good judge) I have bright *hideas*? I have an idea no one can dispute it sir; no gammon, you only flatter me; I am above flattery sir: well, I declares you always *agrees* with me—Oh yes sir, it is impossible not to admire bow prolific you are in thought; besides I love fun sir, ha ha ha—I can't help laughing in recollecting how the word sir, pleased him; this is a positive fact, and may be relied upon,

As an inscription was necessary for this medal; I set to work and wrote an English one for one side, and a French one for the other, but I forgot the French, however, the English ran thus—to our high, illustrious and pontifical brother Tonsor, (mentioning his name) the members of the Society of Arts patronized by the late King Rhio of blessed and glorious memory, (but who fell a sacrifice to the measles) present this gold medal, for the great skill he exhibited in shaving their late King's anointed head, post mortem.

Dick was overjoyed, and said it was the most brilliant of all my compositions.

### *Stultissime Stultorum.*

Whether he will wear this medal I neither know nor care.

I will now take my leave of this Barber till I see how he conducts himself; I will watch him as close as ever a mouse was by a cat; had he kept his slanderous tongue quiet, had he behaved with common decency, and were he not the greatest liar in the King's dominions, I would have been the best friend he ever had. My misfortunes arising entirely from domestic circumstances, this ruffian takes the freedom to attribute to causes suggested by his own malicious heart, he never yet spoke well of any man who lived with him, and there is not one word of truth uttered by him in his business, from the first day of January, to the last of December; whenever you hear him talk of any hair cutter, be assured you are listening to an envious and palpable lie—I am not done with him yet; I have plenty in store for him; but in the mean time Mactab is the prince of liars and Harlequin the emperor of them. Dick's epitaph shall be

*Hic jacet Maledicus Tonsor.*

As a Postscript, I beg to add that I am preparing for the Press a little tract concerning the West End Barbers. While I am soliciting the patronage of Ladies and Gentlemen, I do not assume exclusive merit ; it is disgusting to eulogise one's self as some Barbers do ; I rest my pretensions on the reputation the world has been pleased to bestow upon me, and in the mean time I will point out a few places where the Hair is always scientifically arranged—Cormic, in Threadneedle Street, is an excellent Hair Cutter ; Foot, in Finch Lane, is the same ; and as you proceed westward, Moss's in Fleet Street, he combines taste with judgment—I am only doing these Hair Cutters justice.

As a Postscript, I beg to add that I am preparing for the Press a little tract concerning the West End Barber. While I am soliciting the patronage of Ladies and Gentlemen, I do not assume exclusive merit; it is disgusting to enlarge one's self as some Barbers do; I rest my pretensions on the reputation the world has been pleased to bestow upon me, and in the mean time I will point out a few places where the Hair is always scientifically arranged—Gornie, in Threadneedle Street, is an excellent Hair Cutter; Foot, in Finch Lane, is the same; and as you proceed westward, Moss's in Fleet Street, he combines taste with judgment—I am only doing these Hair Cutters justice.





